

a<sub>1</sub>  
(amended)

2.(Amended) The shaft according to claim 1 wherein the shaft body has a given cross-sectional area and the projection has a cross-sectional area substantially less than the shaft body cross-sectional area.

Sub D> 9.(Amended) A shaft coupling assembly comprising:

a coupling element including a shaft-receiving slot having a bottom surface and a bolt receiving through bore extending through the coupling element perpendicular to the shaft-receiving slot at a distance X from the slot bottom surface;

a retaining bolt extendable through the coupling element bolt retaining through bore such that the retaining bolt extends at least partially into the shaft-receiving slot with a portion of the bolt at the distance X from the slot bottom surface;

an axial shaft body having upper and lower surfaces and terminating in a forward end configured to be inserted in the coupling element slot;

a bolt receiving recess in the upper shaft surface adjacent the forward shaft end and configured to receive and retain the retaining bolt after the shaft forward end is inserted in the shaft-receiving slot; and

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at least one projection extending from the shaft forward end, the at least one projection having an upper surface contiguous with the upper shaft surface and being spaced from the shaft lower surface a distance greater than X whereby the projection prevents improper clamping of the shaft forward end and any associated feeling of proper interconnection.

10.(Amended) The shaft coupling assembly according to claim 9 wherein the shaft-receiving slot has a given cross-sectional area, the shaft body has a cross-sectional area substantially equal to the shaft-receiving slot cross-sectional area and the projection has a cross-sectional area substantially less than the shaft-receiving slot cross-sectional area.

Sub D> 12.(Amended) The shaft coupling assembly according to claim 9 wherein the bolt receiving through bore is spaced a given distance from an opening into the shaft-receiving slot and the projection has a length equal to or greater than the through bore distance.

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Sub B> 14.(Amended) The shaft according to claim 13 wherein the first and second projections are slightly flexible.

a<sub>4</sub>